



**Testimony on Senate Bill 872 An Act Concerning The Use of Indoor Tanning Devices By
Persons Under Eighteen Years Of Age
Public Health Committee
March 15, 2013**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the almost 8,500 physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS), American College of Physicians Connecticut Chapter (ACP) and the American College of Surgeons Connecticut Chapter (ACS), thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony to you today on Senate Bill 872 An Act Concerning The Use Of Indoor Tanning Devices By Persons Under Eighteen.

The hazardous effects of ultraviolet (UV) radiations are undisputed: skin cancer formation, premature aging of the skin, cataract formation, impairment of the immune system, photosensitizing reaction with various drugs and or aggravation of certain systemic diseases. The toxic effects of excessive exposure to UV tanning bed exposure was recently classified as a Category I "carcinogenic to humans" by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). This essentially places tanning bed radiation in the same toxic category as tobacco and tobacco smoking, mustard gas, and plutonium, among other carcinogenic agents.

Even with well-documented risks of tanning devices, the high volume of use by minors is alarming. A 2010 survey in the Archives of Dermatology reported that 35 percent of seventeen year old girls alone use indoor tanning devices. The high use of such machines by minors has led many experts to believe this is why skin cancer is the second most common form of cancer for young people 15 to 29 years old and this age cohort is experiencing an increase in incidence.

With such clear science behind the health hazards associated with the use of tanning beds, particularly by those under 18, we urge this committee to pass legislation completely banning the use of such beds by minors. There is simply no safe approach for minors to tan using tanning beds. The risks are too great and the rewards too limited. We also ask that language be amended to prevent referral to a tanning bed by a physician in most cases. Physicians have at their disposal other safe and therapeutic methods such as phototherapy when the use of light in treatment is warranted.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony today. Please protect our children by prohibiting the use of indoor tanning beds by minors who may not know the potential risks, including loss of life, that tanning beds could cause because of long term exposure to ultra violet radiation in such a concentrated fashion.